COMPUTER CONSOLIDATION MARKS MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR IRS SYSTEMS MODERNIZATION

WASHINGTON – The Internal Revenue Service today announced the completion of a cornerstone in its systems modernization effort by successfully consolidating and upgrading its major computer systems.

The IRS consolidated 67 mainframe computers spread across 12 locations to 20 mainframe computers in just 3 locations. The original 67 computers were an integral part of the successful processing of America's tax returns, but it reflected the slower technology of the mid 1980s. The 20 smaller and faster new mainframe machines allow for an increase in IRS data storage and data protection capabilities.

The consolidation will help IRS customer service representatives to respond to taxpayer inquiries much more quickly due to a faster system response time. This change along with increased real-time availability will move the IRS and taxpayers one step closer to accessing accounts around the clock.

"The success of the mainframe consolidation project provides a solid foundation from which to build our modernized systems," said Charles O. Rossotti, IRS Commissioner. "We have built a state-of-the-art mainframe environment that supports our mission to deliver top-quality service to America's taxpayers."

The mainframe environment represents a combination of Unisys and IBM systems to support and manage the large amount of data taken from more than over 128 million tax and information returns filed each year.

The agency's consolidation effort, which began in 1997, had to overcome several hurdles during the three-year project. A critical component included ensuring all systems were Y2K compliant and maintaining the systems during three tax filing seasons.

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